



A GLANCE  
AT THE PAST AND THE FUTURE  
IN CONNECTION WITH  
THE INDIAN REVOLT.

BY

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(V.D.)

"If you see man or boy striving earnestly on the weak side, however wrong-headed or blundering he may be, you are not to go and join the cry against him. . . . At any rate, remember that he has found something in the world which he will fight and suffer for."—Tom BROWN'S SCHOOL-DAYS.

(D.P.)

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# THE INDIAN REVOLT.

## CHAPTER I.

AT a time when the eyes of all men are open to the glaring errors and imperfections in our Indian system of government, which has resulted in such a revolt and mutiny as cannot be paralleled in history, and when the columns of every newspaper have teemed with suggestions and plans from many who, before the realization of this fearful catastrophe, were content to repose in placid indifference and apathy, I feel impelled, in offering a few remarks for the consideration of those interested in the welfare of our fellow-countrymen in India, to reproduce a few extracts from the cautions and warnings which, in 1852, when all was peaceful and quiet, I ventured, at the cost of grave imputations of being an alarmist, to publish in an Address to the Proprietors of East India Stock. The subsequent alteration in the terms of the Company's charter induced me to forego my design of canvassing that body generally, but I printed and distributed no less than 400 copies, of which many were circulated to persons in the highest positions, and filling the most important situations both in India and in England. The elaborate Address I had prepared commenced as follows. Paragraph 1:—

"I beg to solicit your support in view to my election as one of your Directors for the management of the affairs of the East India Company.

"It is proper that I should state to you the grounds of my appeal, and I have thought it also incumbent on me to explain generally the views and opinions I entertain in regard to the system and policy it is desirable to pursue in conducting so difficult, so peculiar, and so vast a Government as that of the British Empire in the East."

At Paragraph 7, I observed that—

"The stability and internal tranquillity of our vast Indian pos-

sessions require, in the chiefest degree, the constant vigilant attention of the Governing Authorities, both in Europe and in Hindostan. Our extensive conquests since the commencement of the present century have perhaps enlarged our dominions to the utmost extent necessary or desirable; but we may nevertheless find it impossible, consistently with safety and good policy, to arrest the tide of conquest. On the East, on the West, and to the northward of us, still remain powerful, turbulent, and in some cases warlike and ambitious neighbours. As with Bhurtpore formerly, so probably will it be with the kingdom of Nepal. A second war will some day be entered on to decide the final mastery, and our peaceful and fertile plains will witness the descent of an army of warlike and well-appointed Goorkahs, with possibly Thibet and China at their back."

After entering into various details, in which, among other matters, I enforced the necessity for "*confirming and consolidating our supremacy*," and observed that "to strengthen and secure our centre, and the long line of the Himalayan frontier, should be now, and during the years of peace, the subject of grave consideration and deliberate and scientific arrangement," I entered, at Paragraph 12, on the subject of the Native Troops. It runs as follows:—

"No considerations can be more important than those connected with the discipline and welfare of the native forces in India. Within the last twenty years much has been done in each of the armies of the three Presidencies in view to improvement, and it is to be hoped with effect. But fanciful and mere theoretical changes, however well intended, prove often fallacious when practically applied; and that some erroneous steps have been taken of late years, in regard to the increase of pay and allowances to the Sepoys, can scarcely, I fear, admit of a doubt. To retrace our steps on such occasions is sometimes impracticable, or, at the least, dangerous and unsafe, and we can do nothing at the price of disaffection. Those who hold the reins of Government, whether at home or in India, should never be forgetful of the fact that our armies are composed of mercenaries, not of national troops; and that when, in the course of events, they shall become nationalized, it must necessarily be in opposition to foreign rule and domination. Our conquests, which have brought so many kingdoms and provinces under one form of Government, together with our system of education and freedom of the press, are gradually *nationalizing India*. For the sake alike of the governed and those who control them, it is desirable that the just and philanthropic views which have actuated our Statesmen in introducing these and

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other measures of amelioration, should be slowly, even tardily, progressive; and if this, as I conscientiously believe, is applicable to the great mass of the people, it assuredly, and in tenfold force, applies to the native troops of India in European employ."

And again, in the following paragraph:—

"We have carried to the very verge of prudence a system which was and is admirable while kept within due bounds. We have been so successful that there is danger of our becoming too secure; but the tens of thousands which compose our armies in the East, are simple mercenaries, opposed to us as much in faith, nation, and feeling, as in colour. We should be sedulously careful, therefore, *to maintain a just equipoise*, for our real strength does not consist in overwhelming bodies of mercenaries,—these may indeed one day constitute our chief weakness,—but in the numbers, the valour, and the discipline of our fellow-countrymen: These, and our European officers serving with the native troops, we should increase and foster as far as the means and finances of the State will admit, for on them we must depend when troubled and stormy times shall hereafter arise; while we should be ever on the watch to avoid that false and specious system that in its result would convert useful and obedient auxiliaries into greedy, pampered, and overbearing Pretorians."

In the foregoing, I endeavoured earnestly to attract attention to the necessity for maintaining "a just equipoise" between "the overwhelming bodies of mercenaries in our employ, and the European national troops;" and to enforce attention, I added: "It is not without a motive that I advert to these grave matters, for although no alarmist, I hold *that it is fatal to slumber on in a fancied security.*"

It may be asked by some intelligent reflective reader, But did this paper ever reach the eye of any one in authority, having power to inquire and move in such a business? My reply is, Yes, many; but I give one proof. I printed this paper at Simla, in the beginning of August, 1852. I sent a copy to Lord Dalhousie, then in Calcutta, and had some correspondence with him on the subject; he uttered no word of dissent in reference to my estimate of the dependence to be placed upon the Sepoy troops; but his own words will be a convincing proof that he thought them just, and that my becoming a Director of the Company would be productive of good. I am not aware that in making this use of them I infringe on any received etiquette; I am not using them in order to attack his Lordship, but to show that I did make known my opinions in the very highest quarter, and that if no inquiry or reform followed, I at least

may claim to be exonerated from any charge of blindness or supineness. *Speaking before the event*, I think it will be allowed that I could scarcely have said more, for I was filling at that period a very important situation, that of Adjutant-General of the Army in Bengal, and I was liable to be called upon both to explain and justify my opinions. From Lord Dalhousie's communication, to which I have alluded, I extract as follows:—

“Government House,  
“16th August, 1852.

“My dear Tucker,

“The intimation you give me of your views towards the Direction, does not take me quite by surprise; and I shall be heartily glad to see them accomplished.

“I doubt I can aid you with little beyond good wishes. When I was appointed to this Government, I did not know one of the Court, except — and Mr. —. Besides these I can't say I know any now, but those who have been in the Chair.

“It does not seem to me that they will let you start while you are employed. But if they do, as whenever they do, I will most readily write to those whom I do know among them. — asked me (with the same object in view as you now propose to yourself) to write to him if I thought well of him, and say I wished him success. I was not vain enough to suppose this would be of much use. He thought so, however, and if it was useful then, it will probably be equally or more so now. If you should think so, I shall be truly glad to do it whenever you express the wish. Always yours sincerely,

“(Signed) DALHOUSIE.”

At Paragraphs 15 and 16 of my Address, I entered upon the state of the Civil Government; that was a matter requiring delicate handling, for no persons are more easily aroused than the Bengal Civil Service of the present day, when any hint is given that they do not appear to be altogether infallible. Nevertheless I wrote as follows:—

“As regards the civil administration, there is still avowedly a wide field open for amelioration; much has been done, much remains to do. The state of trade and manufactures, the revenue, the encouragement and improvement of the agricultural system, the condition of the native press and its tendencies, as at present exhibited, the construction of railroads and other scientific works and discoveries which can be made applicable to the East, each

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and all demand the most careful attention; and the fostering aid; guidance, and support of Government are essential to the well-being of these interests in India, and in many cases to the perfect development of the great resources of the country.

"The state and efficiency of the civil courts, their adequacy to the ends in view on their introduction, also, require to be looked into with a jealous and precise scrutiny; for on the purity and simplicity with which we administer law and justice to the natives of the country, the prolongation, stability, and popularity of our rule will, in a great measure, ultimately depend. I feel constrained to avow candidly that, in my opinion, great defects at present exist, and that the venality which is stated to pervade our courts of law is a theme of condemnation throughout the country, chiefly attributable, however, even among themselves, to native venality and falsehood, and in a great degree also to the insufficiency of European superintendence, a supervision which, I may observe, cannot judiciously be dispensed with until a higher moral sense and far greater integrity of thought and conduct shall characterize the natives, who are quick to observe, keenly apprehensive, and quite capable of distinguishing between those *ad captandum* acts which have merely a popular tendency, and those which emanate from a pure and true spirit of philanthropy. Those rare acts and judgments which stand the test of time, and which, often at first unpopular, confer nevertheless a just fame hereafter, are never lost upon them; and European domination will therefore sustain no shock and lose no ground in the native mind, by the pursuance of a firm, cautious, and circumspect system of government; on the contrary, our rule will be raised greatly in their estimation by observing that we are not hastily carried away by new systems and plausible theories, nor easily led into the adoption of unexpected, fanciful, and ill-digested measures."

Now I will avow that I look upon the Indian Civil Service as composed generally of a most zealous and admirable body of men; but I think, notwithstanding, that great defects exist in its constitution, and that it has of late years much deteriorated: that it has become too exclusive, too much of a "vested interest," and so puffed up with self-complacency, in consequence, that it is almost impossible for the sentiments and opinions of an outsider to penetrate within the circle of its clique-like reserve. Like the unhappy native army, it has been pampered, petted, and indulged, until it cannot stand the least control or opposition, and I am greatly in error if the corre-



syndicate of the Court of Directors will not show that of late years, even in the Council Chamber, unseemly, disrespectful, and insubordinate letters were addressed by the civilians of that body to the Honourable Court. Hence, when the present mutiny broke out, the opinions of independent military men were disregarded, and when officers of conduct, courage, and experience were writing from the seat of Government, that "we had *only* now to fight for it," the civilians in the council of Lord Canning were hugging themselves in the belief that the crisis was past, that the mutiny was stifled, and that an undue and unnecessary outcry had been raised! Where, it will be asked, was the Military Secretary to the Supreme Government of India at this time? What were the counsels and opinions of that officer at such a crisis? More of that hereafter. His acts shall be given in the words of an eye-witness on the spot—one who has manfully dared to speak out. The very simple reply to be given to the question here is, that the Military Secretary was "nowhere." Brosey for evil, he does not appear to have even found a place. Another proof of the impolicy of advancing men to high and important positions, who have no sterling merit, and whose rise is due to mere favoritism and that pliability of disposition which bespeaks a ready parasite, while it betokens the reverse of that honest independence so necessary to the just and upright discharge of important public duties.

To return—at Paragraph 17 of the Address to the Proprietors, I observed that the number of civilians should be greatly increased, but "not by a temporary and makeshift system, such as that of borrowing by wholesale from officers of the army, by which practice the military service is so much injured in its efficiency."

And at Paragraphs 18 and 19, I thus wrote:—

"It has been with great justice, thought a duty to foster and promote education in India: but education generally diffused will necessarily produce new desires and suggest new objects of ambition: the process will, it is to be hoped, prove gradual, but we should prepare for it, not only with reference to our own, but with reverence also to the future interests of the people of India. The apparent apathy and indifference of the Hindus will assuredly give place by degrees under this system to feelings of patriotism, and a natural craving to exercise as well as to emulate that exalted and ennobling virtue, the desire to promote the welfare of their country, which so generally characterises the natives of the West.

"The effect of that extension of our Empire which the course of

events has forced upon us, has been to produce an internal though almost an unconscious pressure, but which must necessarily greatly increase; and the difficulties attendant on the Government of so vast a country will be increased with it, for we cannot expect the natives of India to remain stationary. Our conquests are consolidating and becoming by degrees nationalized; but it should be remembered that dominion, equally with "glory," may be likened to those circles in the water which never cease to enlarge themselves, "till by broad spreading they disperse to nought!" In brief, our difficulties and dangers augment with our greatness, and with every prostrate and conquered kingdom, we are raising up a united internal force and pressure, which it will require all the wisdom and all the prescience our statesmen can bring to bear upon it, to regulate and control; and it is therefore essential to the well-being and interests of our own country, no less than of India, that she should be ruled and governed by those whose practical knowledge, observation, and experience will guide them to correct views and sound policy."

From this document it will, I think, appear, that I was fully alive to the imperfections of both our civil and military system, and that I desired to draw attention to it, and to aid in reforming it. I have had little opportunity for either. The door is now practically closed to the East India Direction, except to such as have interest with the Minister, or are connected with influential and aristocratic families; and, although in the situation I filled in India I did my utmost to lessen the danger of our position, yet, as it was then impossible, *in the face of all received opinion*, to dilate and insist upon the danger to be apprehended from mutiny and revolt among the Sepoys, I was able to effect but little; what I did attempt I shall briefly advert to in another chapter.

Meanwhile, in reference to what is stated at Page 4, of the "erroneous steps" taken to increase the pay and allowances of the Sepoys, it appears desirable to give an idea to the home reader of what these steps sometimes were, to enable him to understand the peculiarly unwise nature of the system often adopted in dealing with these mercenaries: one instance will suffice. It may be broadly stated, in round numbers, that the pay of the Sepoy amounts to seven rupees per mensem: with that sum he is required to feed and support himself. Certain articles of military clothing are besides supplied to him from the State; but for his food and clothing generally, and the support of his family, when he has any, this is the sum which he ordinarily receives. It is very ample; as a general rule, he saves one-half

of it, and often more, for so covetous and penurious are these high-caste men, that they will often literally half starve themselves to add to their savings; and I have positively known the medical officers of corps (than whom no class of public servants in India are more intelligent and meritorious) report men for thus denying themselves a sufficiency of food, and who, in consequence, had become so weak and emaciated as to be obliged to go into hospital!

A few years since, notwithstanding, it was thought desirable, for the sake apparently of mere change, for nothing really called for such a measure, to "better the condition" of the Sepoy, and it was resolved on the part of Government to increase their pay, and to add to it one rupee monthly, after sixteen years of service, and a second additional rupee after twenty years of service in the grade of private: these additions were to be called good-conduct pay, and could only be drawn for when the man's conduct had been unexceptionable for a previous period of two years. The theory of this very impolitic and foolish increase, which took annually a very large sum from the public exchequer, without being productive of the least corresponding good, was this:—it was contended by the advocates for the change, that by giving such increases of pay after sixteen and twenty years' service, the Sepoy would be deprived of any just ground for feeling discontent if he were passed over for promotion to the non-commissioned ranks; these additions for "good conduct" would sufficiently compensate him, it was said, for the loss of promotion, and his position would still remain an enviable one, while the addition was a proper reward for previous faithful service and good conduct. To these *ad captandum* arguments the more practical reply was, Let well alone. Do not teach your mercenaries to think that pay can be so easily raised and increased at the pleasure of any Governor or Commander-in-Chief. To imbue with such an idea mercenary troops, is to court demands of a pecuniary description which no State could support, and is to introduce amongst us the instability and fluctuations so common among the troops of the native states; when, moreover, there is no real occasion for it, and when, except in mere theory, its action will be found alike embarrassing and injurious. And so in my judgment it proved to be; for to refuse a Sepoy promotion who was enjoying extra pay for being well conducted, involved, as was soon found, a practical contradiction. Sepoys so passed over were in the habit of inquiring, "Why then did they receive extra pay, if they were not fit to be made corporals?" and the specious arguments employed were of no avail to convince them that they did not suffer an injustice.



Council, strongly and urgently denounced the injustice and harshness of the measure, but the military class of the servants of the Company have rarely any influence at the India House, and the injustice continues to be perpetrated to this day, and is to this day also the cause of just discontent; for no quibbling logic can upset the broad fact, that in support of a foolish theory, the Directors have continued a system of payment whereby the European officer receives least pay when he most requires it, while the Sepoy, who did not require any increase at all, and to whom it was most unwise to give it, continues to receive the same, although the reasoning under which it was bestowed has been found to be utterly fallacious.

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## CHAPTER II.

It is not only our military system that has failed in India, but our whole civil, fiscal, and judicial policy requires to be remodelled. We have been weak and philanthropical. We have shown ourselves as rulers entirely wanting in that stern vigour, foresight, and insight into the native mind and character, so essential to the maintenance of our supremacy. We have been unwilling and reluctant to believe in that deep duplicity and consistent guile with which the *Mahomedan* native of Hindostan, more especially, so well conceals his deep-rooted malignity and hatred. Now for a time the eyes of the British public are opened, and we should seize the golden opportunity, and amend our system. It is to that end I desire to contribute my humble quota to the general information, for the question is now a national one. The will and voice of the people must now be consulted, and it is not by the Court of Directors, or even by the *Sic volo, sic jubeo* of Lord Palmerston, that the future form of Indian Government will be decided. Indeed, if, as had nearly been the case, the indecision and delay of the Cabinet, and the seeming indifference displayed to the fate of our struggling countrymen, in apparently so wilfully neglecting the means of ready transit through Egypt, had led, as was only too much to be feared, to the total overthrow of our power in Bengal, it

is to be doubted if even the patient endurance of the public would have held the Ministry excused.

To proceed with the record of my own official experience. In the beginning of the year 1850 I became Adjutant-general of the army; and Sir Charles Napier, in nominating me to that responsible post, wrote as follows:—

“From General Sir C. Napier, G.C.B., Commander-in-Chief in India, to Lieutenant-Colonel Tucker, C.B., Adjutant-General of the Army; dated Simla, 27th April, 1850.

“My dear Tucker,

“Your situation as Deputy Adjutant-General, your abilities, and your good service in war, have made you Adjutant-General and you owe me no gratitude. I have only done justice to merit.

“I am, etc.,

“(Signed) C. J. NAPIER.”

The note is characteristic. I insert it to show that it was not through Directorial influence, or subserviency of any sort, that I obtained the appointment. I was naturally earnest to discharge my duties efficiently, after such an opinion expressed by such a man, and worked hard and sedulously with him so long as he remained in India and I continued to receive letters from him even from that sick couch whereon he not long after breathed away his noble but unquiet spirit. But I had no desire to be a partisan; and when, therefore, I was invited by Lord Dalhousie to discuss military matters, I readily avail myself of the opportunity to prepare for his consideration various elaborate memoranda, in the hope that some practical result would follow. I submitted to his Lordship, among other papers, a memorandum regarding the unsatisfactory state of the Cavalry, regular and irregular and suggested various changes and amendments in the system. I submitted a similar paper, of great length, relating to the state of the Artillery, and pointed out the great evils resulting from the paucity of officers and insufficiency of men. At a subsequent period I forwarded to his Lordship a document which I very carefully drew up in which I insisted on the denuded state of the Infantry in regard to officers, and offered for consideration a plan for the formation of a staff corps; and in treating of the state of the native army generally I advocated the abolition of the grade of native commissioned officers of that rank which, in the convulsion and revolt we have to deplore, only produced a nest of traitors, whose duplicity, baseness, and ingratitude will for ever stand unrivalled in the annals of military history.

revolt. What use his Lordship may have made of my suggestions, I have no means of judging; but for the Cavalry, nothing was done until, after an interval of two or three years, Government sent home to the Court of Directors a proposal to disband four, I think, of the regular Cavalry regiments, and to substitute for them two regiments of European Dragoons. That proposal came to head-quarters for the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief. I was called upon to give mine, and did so in a paper which gave so much satisfaction to his Excellency, that he drew the particular attention of the Government to it, and it was sent home for the information of the Honourable Court. The breaking out, however, of the Crimean war, put a stop to this plan, a circumstance greatly to be lamented.

To the Artillery, after a long interval, a slight addition was made, and an additional officer or two was given to each regiment of the line; but the arrangements were quite inadequate to meet the evil complained of,—the wholesale drain, that is, of officers from corps to fill civil and staff appointments, and under which system the most experienced officers were withdrawn from regiments, leaving for the discharge of regimental duties an altogether insufficient number.

But it is not to be supposed, that in advocating privately with the Governor-General changes and alterations, I thought I sufficiently performed my part. On the contrary, I pressed on the Commander-in-Chief, and by his authority on the Government, *usque ad nauseam*, the necessity for an increase to the Artillery, etc. etc.; and as opportunity offered, I endeavoured to bring about important changes. I will give two instances, both of them bearing nearly on the present state of affairs. Many people in this country have been surprised to hear of the admirable manner in which the *mutineers* have worked their artillery; the explanation, though scarcely credible, is as follows:—Application had been made by the military authorities, and Government had sanctioned the instruction in the artillery gun exercise of 100 men in each regiment of Native Infantry, and accordingly ten per cent. of our Sepoys were so instructed! I shall not enter into any discussion on this strange fact—it speaks for itself; but I was so sensible of its fatuity, and of the danger likely to result from it, that I took occasion to represent to the Commander-in-Chief the suicidal nature of the measure, and obtained from Sir William Gomm authority for submitting to Government a proposal quietly to stop the practice. In the letter I drafted to Government, I gave my reason for the recommendation in the plainest terms, and said, that in the event of any revolt or mutiny of the Sepoys, the knowledge

thus being acquired would only be an incitement to them to attempt to capture our ordnance. To this despatch a reply, briefly assenting, was received; not one word of remark or inquiry was made. I had been prepared to give *in extenso* my reasons for thinking that the Bengal army was ready, on any sufficiently exciting cause or occasion, to turn upon us in revolt; and the proof that I did entertain this opinion will be found in the letters I wrote in the *Times* at the first opening of this sad tragedy, in which I stood, I believe, almost alone in warning the public of what was to be expected.

The second instance of a warning bearing on what has now come to pass, was in a recommendation I made to Sir William Gomm for permission to apply to Government to disarm all travellers on the great high-roads. I represented, in a letter addressed to the Military Secretary to Government, that the Sepoys all had private arms in their possession, and that it was most desirable to deprive them of these weapons; that the Commander-in-Chief was prepared to do so; but as it was urged, that to deprive them of these means of defence, while proceeding on furlough to their homes, was to expose them both going and returning, and while there, to be murdered and robbed by the armed community and by travellers, for the sake of the savings they were known to carry with them from their regiments, he was anxious that the system of going about the country armed should be first put a stop to. To this proposal an almost scornful and derisive reply was received, and it was asked by the Military Secretary whether the Commander-in-Chief really meant to recommend to Government such an impracticable plan as that of disarming the whole population of the Upper Provinces. Now, there was nothing at all impracticable in the matter. Sir John Lawrence had done the same thing in the Punjaub, and we now know of what signal benefit such a procedure would have been; but the Governor-General was sick, and, it was said, splenetic, and there was a most pernicious and adverse influence at work in the Military Secretariate. I do not pretend to quote the actual words of the despatches in those two cases, but they were precisely to the effect I have described, and will be found on record in the Military Departments in Bengal.

It may be remarked, To what end write of past errors of Government, which can now in their narration be inoperative for good? To this I would reply, that not only may good be educed in the future, by showing the errors we have fallen into, but the wilfulness too often displayed by governors, secretaries, and others, in combating judicious measures merely because they were personally opposed



to those who suggested them, ought to be held up to just condemnation; and I will conclude this part of my subject by an instance, showing exactly how such feelings may operate to the detriment of the public service. I was much struck, when I first succeeded to the post of Adjutant-General, at the way in which numbers of the older officers in command of divisions, districts, and stations, applied to me, both privately and publicly, for advice as to how they had best act in such and such emergencies. I found that to rely on themselves was the exception—that almost all seemed to wish to lean on authority before committing themselves to action—in a word, a great bugbear prevented their acting on their own judgment: *that bugbear was the dread of responsibility*, produced chiefly by the “wiggling” system of the Government. I set myself to work to combat this system. I wrote in the most friendly spirit numerous letters, showing how badly such a system must necessarily work; pointed out the purpose for which men were placed in these important and lucrative posts; and deprecated the reference of every petty detail for the opinion of the Adjutant-General, and more broadly the system of centralization which had sprung up. I had reason to suppose that my efforts, during the six years I was Adjutant-General, were productive of much good; but there was a higher influence than that of the Army Head-Quarters at work, an authority under which the native Articles of War, with all its faults and errors, had been prepared; I allude to the Military Secretary to the Government, who had previously served all his life in the department of the Judge-Advocate; a department admirably calculated for generating a quibbler where that turn of mind existed, but extremely ill calculated for the training of a Secretary to the Supreme Government, who should be one able and willing to take a broad, general view, free from the petty bias which, as Sir Charles Napier used justly to observe, far too frequently characterizes the class of military lawyers; but we have the opinion of this great soldier, in his life, by Sir W. Napier, of the amount of merit to be discovered in the *ci-devant* Chief of the Judge-Advocate’s Department. To proceed: one striking reason for the laxity in point of discipline which too often called for censure, appeared to me to rest with the Government,—the appointing, namely, to important commands, of worn-out and incapable officers, merely on account of their seniority. Soon after I became Adjutant-General, I wrote, with the approval of the Commander-in-Chief, a very strong and earnest despatch, pointing out the evils, and suggesting the remedy. The then Secretary to Government, Colonel J. Stuart,

was a man of vigorous understanding and sound sense; he warmly seconded the proposal, and Lord Dalhousie at once assented in terms of praise and approbation. Vacancies existed on the Divisional and Brigade staff, and at once some half-a-dozen incapables were set aside; and the Commander-in-Chief, thus secure, as he imagined, of the support of the Indian Government, nominated junior officers, considered more equal to the performance of such responsible duties. But the affair did not thus terminate; Colonel Stuart fell sick, and was succeeded, though he was known earnestly to deprecate such an appointment, by the present Military Secretary; and at an interval of some two years, the Commander-in-Chief was called upon by this officer, in the name of the Government, to state more specifically the reasons for passing over one of these worn-out, used-up old Generals, a man who, in his best days, had been notoriously inefficient. The Commander-in-Chief observed, in commenting on this unexpected communication, that he did not know personally any of the officers who had been superseded; that he was obliged to depend in such matters on the confidential report and explanations of the Adjutant-General, who was responsible for the fidelity of his representations; but that it was altogether too much to expect of that functionary to give, in detail, each and every item constituting inaptitude and incapacity on the part of those superseded, for public report to Government, *and communication, when solicited, to the aggrieved parties concerned*; and that, finally, the letter from the Military Secretary under comment appeared to be strangely at variance with that from his predecessor on the same subject. Ultimately the supreme Government gave way, and no such explanation as had been required was furnished!

I have little to say in this place of the details of the measures of reform and change which the state of the native troops and the general disorganization prevalent everywhere in Bengal, so loudly demands. "Indophilus" and others have written nearly all that can be said of practical use in way of suggestion; and to re-echo and repeat what is now so generally seen and felt, would be merely pedantic and useless; I will therefore offer only a brief outline of the principal changes I would advocate. Those changes, to be of use, must be most carefully and dispassionately considered; and it is to be hoped that, in the alterations and revision which will take place, the brave and devoted Indian officers who are now so heroically upholding the empire, without one word of despondency, far less of despair, will not be made to bear the onus or to suffer for

the faults of a vicious system over which they had no control, or for the blindness, fatuity, and utter want of prescience which has characterized too many of the acts, both of omission and commission, of those in authority. The officers of the Bengal army, unwisely shipped for the East at the immature age of sixteen, are a wonderful body, considering the difficulties with which they have to contend. It is true they cannot perhaps dress, on their return to their native country, like the more finished loungers of Regent Street and the Clubs, they are not so graceful and refined in a drawing-room,—they were exiled ere they could attain to that style of seeming superiority; but for all real, manly feeling and acquirements they have, as a body, few superiors. Those acquirements have been diverted by the Government into improper and unprofessional channels, to the great loss and detriment of the military service; but for that *they* are not the responsible parties.

Of the army before Delhi, Henry Tombs, for daring gallantry, manly and professional readiness, could not be surpassed in all Europe. Nor in all the ranks of the British army here, at home, will a more accomplished, talented, or more thoroughly instructed staff-officer be found than is to be met with in the person of Captain Henry Norman. Of Brigadier-General Nicholson, who shall speak in terms of adequate praise? To the firmness, courage, and judgment of this officer, and to that equally brave and unhesitating man, Sir John Lawrence, we owe our very existence in the North-west. Major Edwin Johnson, Adjutant-General of the Artillery, in the field is an officer who, for calm excellent judgment and great official aptitude, cannot be surpassed. And from among those sacrificed to the inefficiency of our system, how many names of gallant and able men appear. Let me pay a brief tribute, in adverting to the fate of some few—men who were honoured and respected by all.

Colonel J. Finnis fell devotedly at the Meerut outbreak. He had written to me while his regiment was marching to that station; and, with his usual sagacity, observed, that "some very strange feeling had come over the Sepoys," that "something was brooding." That mystery was soon to be solved; and so fell one of my earliest Indian friends.

Lieutenant-Colonel Tudor Tucker, of the Cavalry, fell, after having for eight days worked day and night as a common gunner, with all that zeal and earnestness for which he was through life distinguished. He was as gentle and amiable as he was brave and devoted, and not a man in India fell more generally beloved. To the end he was

favoured, in that he died while yet the heroic defence of the few officers at Futteghur was maintained—ere yet the captivity of his wife and family, ending in revolting massacre, had occurred.

Of that gallant, able, and most talented officer, Major Fletcher Hayes, Military Secretary in Oude; of Edward Fraser, Commandant of the Sappers; of Arthur Gibbings and John Smith, of the Irregular Cavalry; of Herbert Gardner, Stuart Beatson, Lieutenant-Colonel Philip Goldney; Lieutenant Robert Stuart, Adjutant of the 6th Native Infantry; Major Banks, who fell in the performance of his arduous duties at Lucknow; and many other dear friends, it need simply be said, that they fell in the execution of their duty, victims to the incautious policy of rulers too weakly secure in their ideal empire of opinion, and too fully persuaded of their personal inviolability—of that “divinity” supposed to “hedge” the persons of the present race of Indian civilians in high office—to take the commonest precautions the trust delegated to them demanded, even when it was notorious that Mahomedan and other conspirators had for years been preaching a crusade against us, and the native press teemed with articles only too well calculated to produce disaffection and revolt. The English world will not fail to notice the heroic struggle made everywhere, and in the face of all difficulties, by the general body of officers, Queen’s and Company’s—all alike confident in the final result, even when most pressed upon and outnumbered; and we may be justly proud of bearing and conduct which has so gloriously upheld the national character.

If here and there imbecility or cowardice have been productive of great evils, as at Jullundur, Meerut, Dinapore, Allahabad, even at Calcutta,—where at least a sense of duty should have assumed the appearance of firmness,—it has been owing to that system under which mere negative merit, when backed by seniority, has been considered to possess a *claim* to fill situations of responsibility and importance. Under this system, which has been common to the Horse Guards equally with the Indian Government, old and infirm officers have been appointed to commands, to discharge the duties of which they were physically incapable; in a revolt such men were helpless, hence the Dinapore affair, for which however the Government is the *real* party to blame. In Calcutta,—and one cannot record it but with a feeling of shame,—at the very time when firmness, courage, and a good example were most required, it is mentioned in letters as a positive fact, that on the night of the 9th of that month, now popularly called “fright night,” one member at least of the Supreme Council

sent his wife, for safety, on board a vessel in the river, while the Military Secretary to the Supreme Government took his, under a similar plea, into Fort William. The scene of panic that would necessarily ensue, when the principal officers of Government set such a wretched example, may well be imagined; the only wonder is, that the native population were not incited by it to rise in revolt and insurrection; and if, seeing the causeless panic, they had done so, to whom but to these men could we impute the loss of the capital? It may be said, that it is easy to condemn others for want of firmness,—that if ourselves so circumstanced we might equally fail. That is true, in a general way, but we are to recollect that these persons are paid extravagantly for the *efficient* performance of their duties. The Councillor, whose timidity—the Military Secretary, whose “moral courage” induced him, at all hazards, to secure the safety of his “better half,” receive, the former £10,000, the latter about £5,000 per annum of the public money. Surely, for such sums we ought to be able to ensure, at least, the respectable discharge of the duties entrusted to them? I may make such observations with the more confidence, because I never myself, while in office, shrank from incurring responsibility. On one occasion, even in a time of peace, I thought it my duty to point out to the Commander-in-Chief the inability, from age and other causes, of no less than three Brigadiers to perform their duties efficiently, and they were removed in consequence of such report from the command of their respective districts. On another occasion, I recommended the summary removal of an officer from the command of a station, who had demurred to obey the orders of His Excellency. And yet, with all these examples, no one, it seems, could be found to incur the responsibility of removing or suspending, at a most critical time, the officer commanding the Dinapore Division, when it should have been clear to any ordinary capacity, that the most sad results must almost necessarily ensue from his reluctance to disarm the native regiments there. At such a time energy and earnestness at the seat of Government were imperatively called for; and that the disasters in the Dinapore Division are imputable to the want of these qualities in those in supreme authority in Calcutta there can be no sort of doubt.

## CHAPTER III.

It has often been asked, What are the precise causes which have led to this detestable display of the worst passions of human nature? Has love of country, or religious zeal and bigotry, or mere detestation of a foreign yoke, incited the native army to this revolt? To this I would reply, that fifty causes have combined to generate suspicion and jealousy and a general inimical feeling; but love of country or patriotism have no place in the catalogue. Our unhappy countrymen have been, in my deliberate opinion, the victims chiefly of the supine, unstatesmanlike, and weak, shallow views and proceedings of our rulers. It is painful to animadvert on the acts of men we have known and personally liked; and in speaking of Lord Dalhousie's administration I have no wish to say one word in unnecessary disparagement; but the truth is, that the rule of this nobleman has been most unduly extolled and over-estimated. He was young and of high birth, and the *protégé* and personal favourite of the Duke of Wellington, and he brought with him to India a reputation for quickness and ability scarcely exaggerated; but he had not the genius of the Marquis Wellesley, and his admirers (for he had many in India) were simply mistaken when they supposed him to possess a mind so gifted.

This is not the place to enter upon a general review of his Lordship's policy and acts, but I may observe, that much was no doubt effected by him worthy of praise and commendation, although, as a whole, his conceptions appear to have been destitute of originality. His thirst for "annexation" became a positive disease, and he was clearly not alive to the utter insecurity of our position, and was content, apparently, to believe with the herd, that the danger was distant, and the ultimate struggle for supremacy not to be looked for in our day; he seems to have shared, in fact, in that common feeling of common minds, who either do not really foresee danger, or else want the courage to look it steadily and manfully in the face. The annexation of Oude was one of the last important acts of his Government; that is a well-vexed question, and one on which excellent reasons may be adduced on both sides. It has been said that this act was urged on Lord Dalhousie from home; however that may be, my own conviction is, that it was as ungenerous, as ill-timed, and *wanting in good faith*, as it is now proved in its result.

to have been impolitic; for no one, save a mere partisan, can now hesitate to believe that this act of annexation, more perhaps than any other single cause, gave scope and enlarged compass to the revolt now raging. That act cemented into one inimical whole the Mohamedan population of Upper India: after that act there was no further demur; prince and nobleman and peasant were all of one mind,—to compass, if possible, our entire overthrow and extirpation! And now let us inquire how, after this boasted bloodless annexation, the noble Lord proceeded in that business. True, his unexpected occupation of the country was bloodless, that of course necessarily followed; when there was no preparation against, or anticipation of danger, there would be no immediate struggle. A wise statesman would have seen this, and would, even if he thought himself secure for the time, have proceeded to render “assurance doubly sure.” The reverse of this happened; to the already overwhelming native troops of India, his Lordship added other yet more dangerous additions, in the shape of Oude levies, and it nowhere appears that consequent on this occupation he added a single European soldier to our military establishment! The just equipoise so absolutely essential to maintain our supremacy was forgotten, or only so weakly enforced as to be either overlooked or indefinitely postponed! Further words on this subject were useless. The revolt, the mutiny, gradually and slowly commenced; how it was met it is sad and humiliating to detail. The Commander-in-Chief did nothing; European regiments near at hand in the Himalayas were *not* called to the plains, where their presence would have overawed the disaffected; not a European soldier was sent to secure the safety of our depôts and magazines; Delhi, Cawnpore, and Allahabad were unregarded; General Anson finally betook himself to Simla! The Government was nearly as supine; in the beginning, the grave nature of the impending struggle with the Sepoys was ignored, and most valuable time was lost. If in the beginning the unmistakable magnitude of the danger had been bravely faced, much might have been done, and the Government here at home must have acted with decision and promptitude. Troops would at once have been sent, and by the nearest route; and the blood of hundreds of brave men and helpless women and children would have been saved. But in reference to the conduct of the Bengal authorities, I shall content myself with extracting from the ‘Historical Narrative’ of the mutiny the description therein given of the capacity and proceedings of the Military Secretary to the “Supreme Government of India!”

"Colonel Birch.—The Secretary to the Government of India in the Military Department was a man in every way unsuited for his position. Placed early in his career in the department of the Judge-Advocate-General, his confined understanding was exerted in mastering the quirks and quibbles of the law. His intellect being essentially shallow, he was unable to take a broad view of any question; but he would argue for hours, and exhaust all his ingenuity in combating some petty detail. When Sir Charles Napier assumed the command of the Indian Army, Colonel Birch was Judge-Advocate. He was rather afraid of Sir Charles's downright character, and at their first interview exerted all his powers to please him. No amount of special pleading, however, would go down with the great Conqueror of Scinde.

"Sir Charles's bad opinion was, however, of this service to Colonel Birch, that it obtained for him Lord Dalhousie's patronage. That nobleman, eager to show his spite towards Sir C. Napier, took the opportunity of the first vacancy, to appoint Colonel Birch Secretary to the Government of India in the Military Department; thus placing him, *de facto*, at the head of the army in India—giving him a position, indeed, exactly analogous to that of the Minister of War in France.

"A worse appointment could not have been made. Colonel Birch was essentially a sycophant, always ready to give up his own opinion, if by so doing he could curry favour with his superior. He had tried this plan with Sir C. Napier, but Sir Charles found him out, and not only felt, but showed, contempt towards him in consequence; he found it an easier task to ingratiate himself with Lord Dalhousie and his successor.

"But he was also an ignoramus. He knew nothing of the Bengal Army. Many years had elapsed since he had even spoken to a Sepoy. He was ignorant of the composition of the army, as well as of its wants; whilst his previous training had so unfitted him for his post, that he could not even write an order without making it unintelligible by excessive quibbling."

So much for this functionary's characteristics, but that is not all: "Mr. — had one recommendation: if he was narrow-minded and unscrupulous, he was honest; he could not 'smile and smile and be a villain;' he spoke his thoughts freely and honestly, and people, whilst they hated, could not help respecting him,—a sentiment never entertained towards his colleague in the military department."

And the colleague spoken of was Colonel Birch!



Again, the following, we are told, were his acts; and his antecedents quite prepare one for the detail:—

“Yet, in the face of these prejudices, of the order to respect them, and of the danger of the consequences which must result from their violation, no sooner had the Government of India resolved to introduce the Enfield rifle partially into the Indian army, than the Secretary to Government deliberately issued an order which, by violating the caste of the Hindoo, was alone sufficient to bring about a revolt. The Enfield rifle required a particular species of cartridge, and this cartridge, in England, was greased with lard made from the fat either of the hog or the ox. Without reflecting, or, if reflecting, ignoring the consequences of his act, Colonel Birch ordered that the cartridges for use in India should be made up similarly to the cartridges in use in England, and should be used by the native troops; that is to say, that Hindoo Sepoys should handle cartridges besmeared with the fat of their sacred animal, the cow. The knowledge of this fact was conveyed to the Hindoos in the most casual manner. These cartridges had been made up by Lascars—men of an inferior caste. It happened that one day a Lascar requested a Brahmin Sepoy to give him a drink of water from his lotah, or brass pot. The Sepoy refused, on the plea of his superior caste, and that the lotah would be defiled by the touch of the Lascar. The Lascar in reply taunted him for talking of defilement, when he every day touched cartridges besmeared with cows’ fat. The Hindoo, horror-stricken, rushed to his comrades and told them the story; they inquired, and found it was true to the letter. Indignant, believing themselves deceived by the Government, they wrote an account to their comrades throughout India. From that moment the work of the agents of the King of Oude was easy.

“For a man occupying the position of Military Secretary to the Government of India to make so gross a blunder, was unpardonable. Equally so, that, when the mistake was discovered, no disavowal was made by Government for four months, and then only in consequence of the outbreak at Meerut! Well aware that the idea had taken possession of the Sepoys’ minds, Colonel Birch made no attempt to counteract it, gave no intimation that the manufacture of greased cartridges had been stopped. He calmly surveyed the mischief his acts had caused, and did—nothing. Yet this man, whose blundering incapacity caused the revolt, is still Secretary to the Government of India in the Military Department!”

*Ex uno disce omnes!* might almost be said of the Calcutta officials

acting in this sad and disastrous crisis, though in fairness some of the civil secretaries should be excepted, and perhaps General Low. The civilians were necessarily ignorant of just military considerations, as connected with the mutiny. And it would be unjust wholly to condemn Lord Canning; he, no doubt, has done his utmost; he had not been long enough in India to acquire reliable knowledge and information; he was dependent, therefore, on the judgment and counsels of those who surrounded him. That they were altogether unequal to the crisis, few will deny. It is true, that after the revolt was full-blown, troops were sent for to Ceylon, Pegue, China, and other places, but time had been sadly wasted, and when, as I have before remarked, officers of experience were writing to me from the very seat of Government that we had now "*only to fight for it*," the Government was busy in ignoring the magnitude of the revolt, and in endeavouring to induce the belief that the excitement and danger was subsiding!

Again, long after the whole country was everywhere in open revolt or commotion; when scarcely a regular regiment was left; when, to the shallowest intellect, all reliance on the Native Infantry was shown to be simple delusion, what was the conduct of the Government? At Dinapore, a station only two days' post from Calcutta, where an infatuated old General between seventy and seventy-five years of age commanded, three native regiments were suffered to retain their arms. The General is to be tried, we hear, by court-martial. To what end? He *had been* a brave and able officer, and had the Government done its duty, his career would probably have ended in honour as it began. To trust the safety of Bengal at such a time to the discretion of an old worn-out man, whose sympathies naturally were with the troops he had served with for half a century, was unwise to a degree. He ought to have been *ordered peremptorily* to disarm the native regiments; the Military Secretary to Government should so have counselled the Governor-General; and if General Lloyd had demurred or hesitated, instant supersession should have followed. But mere omission was not the only fault of the authorities. The Calcutta community saw the imminent danger, and petitioned Lord Canning to avert it, by disarming the Dinapore Brigade. Even this solicitation, it seems, was unattended to, for official incapacity does not readily give ear to even the wisest counsel. The result of this culpable inaction is well known to the British public, and but for the able conduct of that gallant officer, Major Vincent Eyre, of the Bengal Artillery, more fatal consequences would have ensued.

I now approach, and with reluctance, the case of the Court of Directors of the East India Company. I am a retired officer of the Company; one of my nearest relatives, the late Henry St. George Tucker, was an honoured and a most influential member of the Court for many years, and I feel every disposition to speak of them in terms of respect. Nevertheless, I am constrained to state broadly my opinion that the delegated rule of the Directors is no longer beneficial to the State; its day for usefulness has apparently passed away; it no longer commands any real authority; its influence, from whatever cause, is weak, and its component parts do not present to the public view those elements of strength and wisdom adequate to the government of a mighty empire. In India, it is no longer regarded with respect or deference; even its old traditionary virtues are ignored; and when a Government has once ceased to command the confidence of the governed, the sooner it is made to give way, the better for all concerned. The Court has struggled on of late years in a sort of hand-to-mouth existence; and there can be little doubt that its speedy dissolution will follow on the re-establishment of peace. This recent revolt must show clearly to the blindest vision the hollowness of that boasted system the Company and its Governors-General have so long pursued. The temerity of that system; its anomalies and inconsistencies; its weak milk-and-water philanthropy, through which the natives have lost all salutary fear and awe of us; its incapacity or disinclination to protect its European servants when arbitrarily ill-treated and injured by the Indian authorities, will all form the subject doubtless of prolonged and grave inquiry. I will only here suggest one cause of its failure, and point to a single instance in elucidation. It appears, then, that the Court of Directors is composed generally of men too old or too long absent from India to be able to work effectively in its government, and too pedantically wedded in many cases to old opinions and ideas, forgetful that India has moved onwards, and is no longer the precise India of twenty-five or thirty years since, when, for the most part, those gentlemen left the country. We have, for instance, a distinguished member of the Court writing in the 'Times,' that, but for the trials of certain disaffected troopers at Meerut, the Bengal Army might have remained the "loyal Bengal Army" still! How little this venerable senior can know of that army. I write a distasteful truth, but I do it deliberately, and I say now no more than I have often said before the late revolt, in confidential communications to friends and others interested, namely, that the Bengal Army never really has

been, any time the last thirty years, a trustworthy or loyal army; by which I mean that it never has been a reliable, obedient, well-disposed body. We in our blindness have been pleased to assume that it possessed all sorts of virtues; we have ignored and even fostered its vices, and allowed ourselves to be flattered as individuals into the belief that we had won its love and devoted adherence; but a more vain, a more idle and impotent delusion I am confident never existed. In this I know I shall be opposed by many, by many whom I greatly esteem; but I speak after thirty-two years' experience and observation, and I unhesitatingly affirm, that even mere personal attachment on the part of the Sepoys to their European superiors has been isolated and rare; that the singular cunning and duplicity of their character has not been fathomed by us as a nation; that in their guile and craft they have invariably befooled and laughed us to scorn; and that, dispassionately regarded, a more mercenary, huxtering, really inglorious body of men never before were banded together! These will no doubt be considered extreme opinions; I am persuaded, nevertheless, that they are thoroughly well founded. The Bengal Sepoys for many years have been simple mercenaries, without an attempt at disguise, greedy, covetous, and exacting; in the beginning these characteristics may have been less marked, but since the siege of Bhurtpore, in 1826, from about which period my more intimate acquaintance with them first commenced, the peculiarities I have described have undoubtedly attached to them in an unmistakable manner. I shall be told that these Sepoys have fought bravely. Certainly, led by their European officers, they have done so at times; but how often has their conduct been the very reverse! how often dastardly to the last degree—pale, trembling, sneaking out of the ranks on one pretence or another! Many of their European officers in time of war have regretted that it was their fate to be connected with such men. And recently, in a letter from a distinguished staff-officer serving before Delhi, this sentence occurs:—"I never saw the Sepoys fight *half* so well for us as they now do against us." The writer had seen them in all the actions of the Sutledge and Punjaub campaigns. Will the present speak in proof? What, with their overwhelming numbers, and perfectly armed and disciplined, have they done? Except to murder their too trusting and confiding officers, and defenceless women and children, what have they done worthy of the struggle for supremacy they sought to maintain? No! these boasted mercenaries, however at times useful in upholding our dominion in the East, never were loyal, in the proper acceptation of

that term; grasping self-interest has been all along their sole motive and consideration; they were thoroughly and entirely mercenary; and when they had become accustomed to consider themselves irresistible in numbers and discipline, they were ready at once to adopt any plea, such as that of the greased cartridges, for entering on that career of revolt and mutiny which, as they vainly hoped, would transfer to their own ranks and order the power and authority so supinely and unsuspectingly wielded by interloping foreigners. I maintain that for many years the Sepoy army was at heart disloyal to its very core, and all that was wanting to produce the blaze of mutiny we have witnessed, was just such a handle and opportunity as was so loosely and culpably offered to them. I cite the late Sir Charles Napier in corroboration of this opinion. He declared, on the occasion of his disbanding the 60th Native Infantry, in 1849-50, that no less than 40,000 Sepoys in the Punjab were prepared to mutiny! Such was we may now well believe, in reality the fact; and if the fortress of Govindgarh had been seized by that regiment as attempted, the fearful revolt of 1857 would probably have been anticipated! But what did the Court of Directors know of this state of feeling? There was not a Bengal military officer a member of that body, to enjoin caution or inquiry, and all danger was denied and disallowed by the highest Indian authority in that famous controversy since made public. Sir Charles Napier was permitted to resign his office of Commander-in-Chief in India, and the unrest fleetingly there and at home naturally followed in the belief which most administered to their own ease and quiet and to the gratification of their immediate superiors; so the dark cloud was suffered to grow and increase in density, hovering onwards till it broke in that overwhelming outpour which had so nearly uprooted us in our foundations. Whatever some of us in India might think and fear, there was clearly nothing to be said; all intimation of danger was authoritatively denied, and it requires more self-reliance than most men possess to persist in an opinion condemned and ridiculed by all around.

The 'Times' newspaper has said that those who caused the Indian authorities of inertness and want of vigour in not suppressing the revolt when it first appeared, and who say also that it was premeditated, and the result of previous conspiracy, are considered with consistency in so speaking. The 'Times' is a great and powerful authority, and it is with deference I take leave to differ from its opinion that this is only a *conspiracy of inaction*. It may be

conspiracy be crushed and overcome? And if at Meerut short, sharp, and decisive action had, on the massacre of their European officers, flooded the native lines with the blood of those miscreants, what more probable than that the outbreak would have been suppressed? Whereas impunity lent it strength. At Delhi there was nothing to oppose to it; no foresight had been exercised, no judicious arrangements made, no one single precaution appears indeed to have been taken by General Anson, whose practical inexperience and incapacity can never be effaced by that "charm of manner and demeanour" his friends dwell upon, and of which I am equally sensible; but until the flame had burst forth he did not move his European battalions from the hills to the plains, where their presence would have overawed the Sepoys, or put down forcibly their revolt; he neglected to secure with European troops our depôts and magazines; he did not organize a strong column for rapid movement in whatever direction the flame might break forth; he did not enjoin caution and vigilance on that incapable officer, General Hewitt; no commissariat carriage was made immediately available; in short, nothing was done in way of wise prevention, and so the flame burst forth in all its appalling intensity! That sooner or later our own fatal security, the Pretorian insolence of the Sepoys, and that Mohamedan intrigue and virulent hatred which has formed so principal an ingredient in the revolt, would assuredly have produced a similar result, few, I should imagine, will be prepared to doubt. From henceforth our rule will be stronger and sterner, and our hold upon the country much firmer, I trust, than it has ever yet been: it depends upon ourselves to render it so. And we need have no dread of missionary labours—these never have done the least harm. It has been our late greedy and grasping policy; our mismanagement of the Sepoys; our neglect to secure real power; our recent financial blunders, amounting, in appearance at least, to positive fraud; and, generally, the *too rapid* introduction, recently, of general schemes of education and changes in Hindoo laws and customs, which it would have been far wiser for a time to have postponed. These, at least, are my convictions.

I beg now to offer a few brief, general observations, such as in my judgment will be found most conducive to the future permanency and strength of our dominion in the East.

1. The abolition of the Court of Directors; and in substitution, a Secretary of State for India, with a staff of efficient under-secretaries in the various departments, civil, military, and political.

2. The entire abandonment of the narrow and exclusive system in the Indian Civil Service; men best qualified should be appointed, and open competition the test.

3. An entire reconstruction of the military system; no officer to be appointed a cadet before the age of seventeen or eighteen, and all to be required to pass through a military college, whether intended for the Line or for the Engineers and Artillery.

4. No natives to be enlisted who are Bramins, or who will not engage for general service anywhere; and the recruiting districts to be carefully laid down.

5. No officers to be taken from regiments for any merely civil situations, but only for military staff employ, in the strict sense of the term, and after undergoing an examination as to acquirements and aptitude for the particular department for which it is proposed to withdraw them.

6. A knowledge of the native languages to be a *sine quâ non* before any promotion or advancement can be allowed.

7. A strong, stern, but just system of government to be introduced, so that the same shall be viewed with awe and respect by the natives.

8. Europeans should not be subject to trial before natives; and the least outrage on any European, however humble his station, should be punished with severity.

9. The utter futility of the existing native pension establishment having been fully proved, should be carefully revised; and the forfeiture of all present pensions having been justly incurred by the revolt or apathy and tacit hostility of the pensioners, their stipends should be at once swept away, except in very special cases.

10. The natives of India within the British territories should be carefully disarmed, and watchfully kept so.

11. Respect for all Europeans, and for Her Majesty's Government, should be firmly and *persistently* enforced.

12. The native press in India should be kept under a strict censorship. It has been disseminating treason and sedition for years; and the recent classing of the European and native press together, was alike unjust and impolitic, robbing the State, at a critical period, of the zealous services of the former.

13. The discontinuance of the practice of bestowing upon Governors-General pensions of £5000 per annum. That system is of the "springs to catch woodcock" order; and but for the desire it has generated to conciliate the Court of Directors, a more just.

equitable, and generous policy would often have been pursued, while the community, native and European, might possibly not have been outraged by the recent five-per-cent. "swindle," whereby the credit of the Government has been injured, and our good faith called in question. A clear £30,000 a year, with all travelling and many other expenses paid besides, ought to be considered sufficient remuneration for any services.

14. The "blue-reined" aristocratic element should be more guardedly employed in responsible situations in the East. Mere men about town, however "charming in demeanour," should not be placed in command of the army; and known incapables should not be sent out as divisional commanders, merely to fill their empty pockets, or to get rid of their importunities here.

15. The military element in India, instead of being degraded socially, as hitherto, should be raised; a new and more just order of precedence should be introduced; and grey-headed officers should no longer be made to give place to boys in the civil service, whose chief merit often consists only in their very near affinity to the Directors in Leadenhall-street.

16. The native police employed in Bengal is now proved to be, as was generally suspected, utterly worthless; it should be carefully remodelled, and an effective and reliable intelligence department should be organized.

17. Battalions of Africans might with advantage be organized; there are many special duties in which they might with great advantage be employed, exposure to which would be injurious to the health of European troops—to aid, for instance, in garrisoning Fort William, and our various magazines, forts, and depôts.

18. The fortifications and public buildings at Delhi, Agra, and Lucknow, ought *not* to be destroyed; these may all be of great advantage to us in the future. At Delhi, the "Jumma Musjid," a commanding and excellent position, might be occupied for other than religious purposes, and all Mohamedan and Hindoo processions within the walls of that city may be strictly interdicted; a rule which, if strictly enforced, will sufficiently mark our re-assumption of power and authority.

19. A body of *efficient* light cavalry ought to be raised. An Inspector of Cavalry should be added to the establishment; the unwise parsimony which would not hitherto grant one has been, as foretold, productive of the worst results.

20. The enormous salaries of the Governors-General, Members of Council, and other high civil and military functionaries, should be



greatly reduced; and the "savings to the State" made by parsimonious clippings from the under-paid captains and subalterns of the army, and clerks and others in the uncovenanted service, should be abandoned. One uniform rate of pay should be given to officers everywhere; and finally, the long-standing absurdity of the half-batta system should be abolished.

*H. D. D.*

## CHAPTER IV.

IN reference to the very inimical feeling with which the Mohamedan population, in my opinion, regard us, as recorded in the beginning of this Pamphlet, I wish to state that my observation on this point is confined to Bengal chiefly. It may possibly be otherwise in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, and the feeling may be moderated in remote districts in Bengal; but I am confident, from personal observation, that at Delhi in particular, and in all our large Musulman cities and bazaars, rooted dislike of us, as Christians and Europeans, is the invariable rule. Officers of the Army see much more of this than the civilians, because these last are in authority, and that with the Oriental generates mere lip-service to an unbounded extent. With the military it is far otherwise; and no man of common observation could well ride through the streets of Delhi, or any large city or bazaar, without being struck with the malignant, fierce expression of countenance with which, on meeting their glances, one is so frequently regarded. The civilian on such occasions rides out with Sowars (armed horsemen) in attendance: and it is with bated breath and seeming respect and humility that these attributes of office cause him to be observed; but the whispered curse and smile of derision, which follow after, are as invariably a part of the performance. I was, as a young man, for three years in garrison at Delhi, and I know the place and its inhabitants well, and have often and often had occasion to marvel at their astonishing duplicity, effrontery, and low cunning,—characteristics common to the great mass of Mohamedans of the cities of Upper India, who, as a body, are as grossly ignorant, morally depraved, and fanatical as it is pos-



had some artillery-men of his own, and there was a company of old pensioned artillery-men at the place.

That they had great numbers, and well-trained, there has been plenty of proof in the way they have served their guns, both from the batteries on the bastions and in the field; in fact their artillery has been the chief difficulty. In the Delhi magazine they found 114 pieces of heavy ordnance, with ammunition and stores in immense quantities; take for example the following items: 24-pounder round shot, no less than 37,700; of 18-pounders, 33,300; of 8-inch shells, 18,900; of powder, upwards of 14,000 barrels: these will show their means of defence. Besides this the enemy was joined by all the Customs' patrols, Burkundauze, and police, than whom no class of men are stated to have committed greater horrors and atrocities. All these trained men, added to the immense population of fanatical Mussulmans in and around Delhi, constitute a force and a power not to be treated contemptuously or encountered carelessly. It must be borne in mind, too, that the walls of Delhi are of considerable strength; there is a deep ditch also, and the place is at least seven miles in circumference; and as to cutting them off from communication with the Jumna and so investing the place, the idea is simply ridiculous, not to say preposterous. With 4,500 bayonets, of which the force originally consisted, that was not to be done, and on the whole the delay in storming the place has doubtless told to our advantage. One side of the city, which takes in the palace and the interior defences of Selimgurh, is washed by the Jumna, the bridge of boats across which we had been unable in the beginning to destroy, although the rise of the river must, when the rains commenced in full flood, have probably done that work for us, and thus one means of escape will, it is to be hoped, have been destroyed. Prematurely to have made the assault might have been eminently disastrous, and failure would have imperilled our authority throughout India. When the last letters left the Camp, on the 25th of August, the siege-train was within ten days' march; and we may, in my opinion, expect confidently to hear that by the 15th of September at latest the city was in our possession. Major-General Wilson is an officer of great ability and judgment, and every confidence may be reposed in him. With the re-occupation of Delhi, the revolt in our old possessions in the *Upper Provinces* will cease, and we shall have simply to resume our control and authority; with Oude it will probably be found more difficult to deal.

And now, before committing these brief pages to the press, I cannot do better than record my humble testimony in favour of the English in India,—of those men who are now so heroically fighting for their country's honour and supremacy, and with whom I can only wish that it was my good fortune to be serving at such a crisis. It may be all very well for those who, in the pursuit of mammon or notoriety, indite exaggerated stories in novels, or for those who desire to shine at the expense of their comrades, to indulge in the ideal description of imputed laxity and immorality in India. The fact is otherwise; simply I may affirm that *it is not so*, and for this sufficient reason, that there are neither means nor appliances available to the European officer for indulgence in vice. We all know what sort of conduct may be “sugared over” in London or Paris, but nowhere in India is the European able thus to pass unnoticed and unknown; the result is, that living openly, and as it were in the face of the community, vice is the marked exception, and decorum and decency are the natural and usual results of our position. The English public at large will not think the worse of Indian officers for being free comparatively from the *pretence* and *affectation* of superior virtue and goodness. My own experience leads me to the broad conclusion, that nowhere are men brought up to be bolder, and more free from all the subservient vices; more honest, sincere, and trustworthy, than they are in India. Our class, by which I mean the middle class, is well represented; there, no one need blush for them; and I will venture to predict that, when the causes of these tragical mutinies come to be hereafter sifted and ascertained, it will be found, that in no one instance were men incited to join in them by indignation or disgust at European vice or immorality. No! lust of dominion and of mammon, lured on these brigands to their fate. It may sound inflated, but theirs has been a struggle for empire; they have sought to “push us from our stools” and to rule in our place; they are now fatally undeceived. Their unexpected battalions burst irresistibly upon our defenceless out-posts, but their superiority has been short-lived; and it is to be hoped that no puling miserable weakness will be suffered to interfere with the stern, just retribution which is due to the memory and fate of our slaughtered countrymen. If the Calcutta Government is too weak to deal with the mutineers and murderers, who have outraged human nature in the infamous atrocities they have perpetrated on our women and children; if, as reported, meekness, tenderness, and lenity are now being enjoined, by the Indian Government, on those who have

endeavoured manfully to uphold our supremacy; if, as stated, the civilians who, at Patna and Monghir, acted with courage, promptitude, and decision, have been removed from their appointments under the displeasure of their rulers, a Royal Commission, to examine into and condemn the guilty who have taken part in this infamous revolt, should be at once sent out to India, and should be composed of men who know how to uphold the honour of our country, protect and avenge the innocent, and to punish the guilty. If a man escapes of those who have outraged humanity, in this fearful revolt, we shall ill have performed our part or our duty to those who have fallen.

In conclusion, I am aware that I shall be blamed by some for so openly expressing my opinion of the incapacity of the Indian Government, and of some of its more prominent subordinates; I shall be blamed for speaking as I have done of the Sepoys, for the delusion connected with these men is yet strong upon many; I shall be blamed, possibly, for presuming to censure some of the acts of the Marquis of Dalhousie. To all this I have but one simple reply, namely, that under ordinary circumstances I should have held my peace, for I have no further connection with public business, or desire to re-engage in it; but I consider that this, if ever there was one, is a time to speak out, and to make known boldly the truth and facts to the best of my knowledge and ability. In the inquiries which I presume will follow on the re-establishment of peace, it is desirable that the conduct of those who govern India should be rightly understood and thoroughly sifted; if it be then found that I have "set down aught in malice," I am content to abide the condemnation of my fellows. I need make no further apology for the open expression of my opinions; and I will only add, that the details I have given in connection with our position before Delhi have been added since the arrival of the Mail from thence of the 25th of August, and since the first part of the MS. was placed in the printer's hands.

*Newport House, near Exeter,*

*October 16th, 1857.*

